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by December it became clear that the problems abroad, which in every other welfare organization seemed to require the personal presence of its head, were for ours also such that I should aid to deal with them on the spot.

Accordingly I came. And I am still here; for the problems proved not definite and temporary but varied and cumulating—and with new ones ever developing to take the place of those already solved. Even as I write—only a month before your Conference—there are still three-quarters of a million men over here. And with the reduction of the forces, and the abandonment of areas, there is a new crop of decisions involved in the curtailment of operations, the salvage of material, and the settlement of contracts. Such decisions must be summary, and such as require ratification must be ratified promptly. So for a time I remain.

But the intensification of the work overseas has not meant a cessation of the work at home, for this had to be maintained in practically its original dimension throughout nearly the entire year. And it also involved certain new problems—in connection with reconstruction, the preparation for home service and especially for the duties of citizenship. All this will appear in the reports of the acting director and of the War Service Committee.

I am sure also that the history of the year as a whole will be presented to you both broadly and in detail by my associates at Washington, and in the report of the War Service Committee, and that the philosophy of it will also be suggested by the latter. Any larger inductions from such an experience come more appropriately from those who, like the chairman of the committee, informed as to the operations, have not been enmeshed in the routine of them. From the two years together one induction will surely be obvious: That for the first time in its history the American Library Association has emerged from an organization with aims supposedly purely professional, into a public service corporation. And though the service has in terms been for an emergency, its influence will be permanent; it will have left a definite impress upon the Government in the Departments of the Army and the Navy; it will have left a continuing benefit upon many individuals widely diffused throughout the country. It will have notified to the public the spirit and the efficiency of an organization whose availability for a general public service had not been realized, and it will have affected the Association itself with a lasting faith in its own abilities.

HERBERT PUTNAM,  
General Director A. L. A. War Service.

#### STATEMENT OF THE ACTING GENERAL DIRECTOR, A. L. A. WAR SERVICE

CARL H. MILAM, *Director, Public Library, Birmingham, Ala.*

It is unnecessary for the acting general director, after presenting a printed report of twenty-six or twenty-seven pages, to make any considerable additional statement. Perhaps it would be well, however, without attempting to summarize the report that we have made, to point out the thread you will see running through it. Since the signing of the armistice, particularly, there have been only two things in mind. The first has been to serve the men—the duration-of-the-war men—in

such a way that we might claim to have contributed something to their general welfare, and to the placing of them back in their normal positions in civilian life. We have done that through the camp libraries, to some extent, and through the hospital libraries, and we have tried to coöperate with you in your public, college and special libraries in accomplishing that end. The other thing has been to leave behind something definitely accomplished.

When the war was over, the American

Library Association had no desire to go on and do a piece of work which I think all of us felt should be done by the Government. But we wanted to handle our affairs in such a way that it would be easy for the Army and the Navy to take over that work. There are a few specific examples where the work has already been taken over by the Army and Navy officials. There came a request from a naval air station to purchase our library—to purchase it because they could not accept a gift. And so we sold our library at Pensacola—not the buildings, for we had none, but the books and our miscellaneous equipment to this naval air station for one dollar. Although the commanding officer had a letter from a very high official of the Navy Department, saying that he was authorized not only to purchase the library, but to employ a civilian librarian, we learned a few days after the transaction had been completed that in spite of what that very high official in the Navy had said, some one had informed the commanding officer that no funds were available for employing a librarian, and he asked us urgently, in a telegram, to leave our man there for an indefinite period. So the library is now owned and operated by the Navy, with a man whose salary is paid by the American Library Association.

An opportunity came for a somewhat similar transfer of the work in Siberia. By the way, I should like to take issue with Mr. Wyer when he said that Mr. Clemens continued in service in Siberia throughout the entire emergency. I wonder if Dr. Keppel, now that he is about to leave the War Department, thinks he is leaving after the emergency in Siberia is over. Some of the mothers and fathers of this country think not. But the work is being continued there, and our representative is a chaplain, a man appointed to that work at the request of the War Department in Washington. The man who took over all of Mr. Clemens' activities is a regular War Department official. Some of you may wonder why he is not a librarian. It is quite possible that among

the few thousand men in Siberia there are no librarians. I don't know as a matter of fact whether in the regular Army there are any librarians who would be available. We are still providing reading matter, but it is a Government affair in every other respect.

I think I might say just a word, too, though I have said it in the report, in explanation of the fact that the war did not stop for the American Library Association when the armistice was signed. I need say nothing more on that point than simply that the peak of our work was reached, not in October or November, or even in December or January, but in May. We were just beginning to drop off toward the end of May, and now we are on the down grade so far as expenditures and work are concerned, but until the 1st of May we were constantly climbing, in spite of the fact that in the minds of many people the war was over.

One final word. There have been so many things said about the American Library Association that are complimentary that I feel that somebody must raise a voice in protest. Secretary Daniels the other day—this may be getting a bit ahead of the game, and stealing some of the president's thunder—Secretary Daniels in a telegram to the man who is to take his place on this program (he sent me a copy of the telegram), said: "I hope you will accept the invitation of the American Library Association, which wants you to speak on the wonderful work of the American Library Association during the war." I think some of you may decide that we asked Dr. Keppel to come and speak on that subject. As the one who had the privilege of tendering the invitation for President Bishop, however, I wish to put in a word to the effect that I protested to him on that day that we were not asking him to come and praise the American Library Association; but as an educator, who had been connected with the war, to come to us and bring a message that might be of practical value in helping us to solve the difficulties which might come

in the future, calling to our attention, perhaps, mistakes which some of us had not seen, mistakes which nobody could see except a man in his position. He has been kind enough not to call our attention to our mistakes. But I wish to voice, on behalf of the American Library Association, the statement that the American Library Association sees many things which it did imperfectly. It is now doing things which

it should have done two years ago. We have made mistakes, some of which seem inexcusable, now that we look back upon them; but because of those mistakes which we see, the opportunities which we missed, the many things which we ought to have done which we did not do, we are more than grateful for the praise that comes from those who have watched our work from the outside.

### SALVAGING WAR LIBRARY SERVICE FOR PEACE TIMES

By MAJOR JASON S. JOY, *Director, Commission on Training Camp Activities, War Department, U. S. A.*

Before I came into the Army, I lived in northern New York, up where the French-Canadians grow. I am reminded of a story told of two of my friends who were fishing on Lake Champlain. A storm came up, and it looked as if the small boat in which they were fishing would be swamped. Baptiste, who was sitting in the front part of the boat, yelled to Joe, "Joe, throw over the anchor." Joe replied, "But there is no rope on the anchor." "Never mind, throw it over anyhow!"

I am supposed to suggest how the work started by the American Library Association with the Army shall be anchored for the future, but I am unable to locate a rope. I don't know how we are going to salvage the work we have been doing. It may be done in one of two ways, and I am going to tell you both of them. Last night one of the "highbrows" of your organization asked me what I was doing here. He didn't understand that a mere Major knew anything about books at all, and I assured him that his guess was about right; that it was the privilege and the duty of the American Library Association to tell the Army and to show the Army how the thing should be done. He also reminded me I did not come to praise, but to bury you. He said you have been praised enough already. However, I want to say this: I came into this work after the armistice had been signed, know-

ing very little of what the affiliated organizations had been doing, and I found that the American Library Association was ready to do whatever we asked them to do, and do it cheerfully. When we asked you to put men on transports you did so; when we asked you to take them off you complied; when we asked you to put libraries on boats and in various hospitals, etc., you came running to do it. I am mightily pleased with the spirit of coöperation and the unselfish spirit that has permeated your entire organization and has been manifested in every action you have taken. That is as much praise as I am allowed to give. I love you all.

There were two jobs handed to me when I became director of the Commission on Training Activities; one was to carry on the work that had been started under Mr. Fosdick, until the last man shall have been demobilized—the last National Army man shall have been demobilized from the emergency army and the other to assist in developing a scheme of carrying this work on through the peace time regular Army organization. The first job is going very nicely, with the hearty coöperation of everyone. It is a hard job now; I realize that the camp librarians are having difficulty in reaching the few men that are scattered all over the cantonments. It is a discouraging proposition, it makes a fellow almost homesick, when he goes into a camp and finds there are just a few